

469

~~12835 a 66~~

1509/2274

THE
L I F E
O F A
B E E.



P.L.
K

THE
L I F E
O F A
B E E.

RELATED BY HERSELF.

London,
Printed and Sold by
JOHN MARSHALL,
No. 4, Aldermary Church-Yard, in Bow-Lane, Cheap-side.



RELATIVES OF THE

LONDON

PRINTED BY

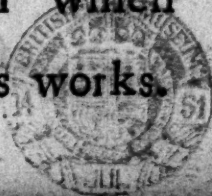
JOHN MESSIAH

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE design of the following little narrative, is to draw the attention of the young reader to the **NATURAL HISTORY** of the **BEE**. A dry detail of unconnected facts, however interesting in themselves, not being in the opinion of the Author,

so well calculated to engage the attention of children, she has attempted to form those interesting particulars which are, upon the best authority, related of this little miracle of nature the BEE, into a regular succession of events set forth in such a manner as to interest their tender minds, that while they eagerly pursue the thread of the story, they may insensibly acquire a knowledge of facts, which cannot fail of exalting their ideas of the Supreme Being, by teaching them early to contemplate that wisdom and perfection which is visible in the minutest of his works.



ADVERTISEMENT.

ix

The Author has only to hope that her views may be crowned with success, and to add, that she has no further recourse to fiction, than as she thought it convenient to introduce truths, and to convey a useful moral.

MY YOUNG FRIEND

THROUGH the medium of a story in which I know your passions, I present you with the true history of the soul. I will not to persuade you that a life any more than another might be capable of depicting or of representing as I have supposed in my story. You need not be told that such things are impossible; yet I have done

To the READER.

MY YOUNG FRIEND.

THROUGH the medium of a story, to which I know your partiality, I present you with the true history of the Bee. I wish not to persuade you that a Bee any more than another insect is capable of speaking or of moralizing, as I have supposed in my story, you need not be told that such things are impossible; yet Providence
has

To the Reader.

x

has, to the little busy people, established laws by which they are governed, and mutually contribute to the support and well being of each other; a *true* account of which, together with their industry, their œconomy, their wars, their loyalty to their Queen, and a variety of other curious particulars that cannot fail of amusing, you will find in the ensuing narrative, for the better understanding of which, I refer you to the subjoined notes, which I request you will not pass over unread, as they will further my intention, which will ever be to unite instruction with pleasure.

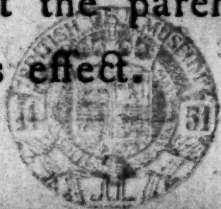
L. P.



THE
L I F E, &c.

WHEN insects could speak, and men understood their language, a Bee was observed to verge toward the confines of a spacious hive. She was still in the vigour of life, but, alas! she had, for the last time visited a favourite rose, and for the last time returned laden from the thyme bank. She advanced with slow and painful steps, followed by five Bees, whose delicate whiteness bespoke them in the dawn of youth. A few days only had elapsed since they breathed the air of their parent-hive; their delicate wings had not yet been stretched in the sun, and yet they had tasted honey only from the mouth of their watchful

mother. At length the old Bee stopped, and casting a look of maternal fondness on these her beloved offspring, in a languid voice, addressed the young Bees. I feel that my end approaches—I shall henceforth sip no honey-dews from the violet, lavender, nor fragrant thyme: these paws will no longer knead the wax, nor seize the bold riser of our stores; my day of work is over—soon, my children, you will assist in bearing me a useless burthen from the hive! short is the time I shall remain with you yet I would fain employ it to your advantage; listen therefore to the story of my life, that by learning to avoid my errors, you may learn also to avoid my misfortunes. The attention of the young Bees was immediately fixed, and they listened in mournful silence, whilst the parent Bee related her history to this effect.



I shall

I shall begin (said the old Bee) from that moment, in which, by a violent effort of my horns, I broke through the wax with which my mother had closed up the entrance of my native cell, and issued into the world a perfect Bee.* I was immediately

* In this place it may not be out of time to inform the young reader, that a Bee is produced from an egg something larger than a fly-blow. This egg being hatched, a small white maggot appears, which is daily fed by the old Bees, and continues to increase rapidly in size. About the fourteenth day it ceases to eat, and then the old Bees inclose it in its cell, by close sealing up the entrance with wax, during the time it remains in this confinement, it gradually throws off its old skin, and, from an ugly maggot, becomes a perfect Bee, and at the time that nature has appointed, which is observed to be about the seventh day, breaks from its confinement as described in the story.

surrounded by several Bees, among which was my mother, and one larger and and more robust than the rest,* whom I judged, from the affection he shewed me, to be my father. I was not mistaken, I afterward understood that he was so, and that neither being furnished with a sting for his defence, nor with proper implements for working,

* The Drone, or humble Bee, generally thought to be the male Bee: this insect has no sting like the other Bees, and is incapable of gathering honey as they do, nevertheless he is very useful to the swarm from his diligence in brooding over the eggs, and assisting the females, or working Bees, in feeding and taking care of their young: for these services he is for a time kindly entertained, and permitted to have his share of the honey they bring home, but when they have no longer occasion for him, they drive him from them as a useless encumbrance.

his

his chief business was to assist my mother in the care of her offspring, which task he had diligently performed by brooding over me whilst in the egg, and afterward feeding me, whilst my industrious mother was pursuing her labours abroad. But to proceed, I had scarcely time to reflect upon what I saw, before the Bees which accompanied my mother, began to assist her in a very minute examination of my person, no part of me was neglected, my wings, my legs, my horns, underwent the strictest scrutiny, happily for me as you will hereafter own, I had the good fortune to please. My parents especially eyed me with transport, and I could see, thought me one of the most vigorous and best formed Bees of the whole swarm. My mother having refreshed me with a few delicious drops from her own mouth, repaired to her cell, at which I was persuaded, from the numbers I soon saw flocking towards

it, and the consultations held among them that business of importance was transacting. I felt a great desire to know what it was, and to satisfy my curiosity, applied to a Bee who was at work in the adjoining cell, from her I learnt, that two of my sisters had entered the world at the same moment I did, and that one of them being imperfect, was condemned by the laws of the community to be expelled as a useless member.* My neighbour added, that my unfortunate sister being in every respect perfect excepting only that one of her four wings was shorter than the rest, it required some consideration to determine whether or not this blemish would render her incapable of sharing in the labours of her companions. This, she added, was the cause of the

* If a Bee is through any defect in nature found incapable of working, she is immediately cast out of the hive by the swarm.

consultation I saw. I was no longer at a loss to understand the purpose for which I had undergone the examination which before surprized me, and felt how much reason I had to rejoice, that no unfortunate blemish had rendered me subject to this severe law. We soon found that sentence had been passed upon my unfortunate sister, who was presently seized by two of the community, and left to perish before the entrance of the city.*

I had not yet strength to leave my cell and provide for myself, § but my mother, with unremitting tenderness, supplied me with such delicious nourishment, that by

* The reader need not be told, that by the city is meant the Bee-hive.

§ The young Bees are for several days fed by the old ones at the mouth, as a bird does her young ones, till they acquire strength to fly abroad.

degrees I acquired strength, and soon began to entertain thoughts of seeing the world. A few hours, by encreasing my vigour, encreased my desire of ranging : I became impatient of an inactivity, which I spurned as inglorious, and longed to stretch my wings beyond the confines of our city, and to rise upon them into a new element.

The tender affiduity of my mother appeared impertinent, and I considered my situation the more irksome, as I saw several Bees only a few days older than myself employed upon business, which I had the vanity to suppose I could perform equally as well, if not better : animated with these aspiring thoughts, I resolved, without loss of time, to venture into the great world.

My mother, who perceived my design, in vain represented to me the folly of attempting to rise upon my wings before I had strength to endure the fatigues of flight, but

I treated

I treated her kind remonstrances with contempt, and, perfectly secure in my own strength and judgment, was proceeding to the confines of our city, when my mother, distracted with the prospect of the danger, in which she clearly saw my imprudence must involve me, in an agitation only to be felt and expressed by a mother alarmed for the safety of her beloved offspring, threw herself before me, and stopped my progress. Alas! my daughter," said she, Why will you thus hurry on to your certain destruction? listen, I beseech you, to a mother whom age and experience has rendered wiser than yourself; to a mother who has nourished, who has fostered you in your age of impotence and deformity.

At the word deformity I fluttered my wings with an air of pert self-sufficiency, which gave my mother to understand, how improper and absurd I thought the expression.

Much as my headstrong folly grieved her she could not forbear smiling at my vanity. Alas! my daughter, said she, have you forgot that scarcely seven suns have arisen since you were a wretched groveling worm, confined to the limits of that cell in which I first deposited the egg that produced you? At that time you were incumbered with a body, unadorned with those wings which you are now so proud of, nay, unfurnished with legs to bear you from the cell in which you first received your wretched existence: alas! my child, had it not been for the tenderness of that mother whose councils you despise, you had not lived to acquire the beauteous form you now wear. Call to mind with what care I nourished you. Remember how I laboured during fourteen suns to supply you with food; alas! my cares did not end here. The fatal hour

* See Note the First.

arrives, when I must no longer behold you. You loathed the food which you had so often sucked from my mouth, a deadly stupor seized you. With what care then did I provide for your safety, by enclosing you in the cell you have now so imprudently forsaken! how did I labour to knead the wax that no fatal breath might enter to impede your progress to a better state! how anxiously did I expect the moment when I should see you break down the waxen barrier I had formed for your defence, and appear in the perfect form you now bear. And will you, my child, by obstinately hurrying on to your destruction, render all these toils, all these attentions fruitless? * Wait a few days till you have

* It is not uncommon for the young Bees to venture abroad too soon. Being scarcely able to fly, they fall down before the hive, and not having strength to rise again and recover home, they unavoidably perish.

strength to endure the fatigues, and wisdom to combat the dangers you must meet when removed from the protection of a watchful mother, at least wait.—It was with the utmost difficulty I had all this time restrained myself from interrupting a discourse which seemed to me the more disgusting, as it informed me I was indebted for the advantages upon which I so much presumed, wholly to the tenderness of my mother. This, however, though it humbled my pride, by shewing me that I was of less importance than I imagined, did not make me change my resolution, so impatient was I to be upon the wing, and to shew my mother that I could now at least do without her, then, without staying to hear what she had further to say, or profiting by what she had already urged, I abruptly left her, and joining a party of young Bees, fluttered out of my native city much condemned by all its inhabitants,

inhabitants, and especially by the elder Bees, who severely censured my folly and disobedience.

As I prided myself much upon my prudence, and resolved to do nothing rashly ; before I took wing I stopped to take a view of the surrounding prospect, and to determine which way I should bend my course. The first thing I did was to congratulate myself on the agreeable change in my situation, for the sun, which shone extremely bright, diffused such pleasing warmth through my whole frame, and gave me such a flow of spirits, that I thought myself one of the happiest creatures in the world, and ridiculed the fears of my mother as vain and groundless. Truly, said I, it must be very perilous in this delightful sun shine ! and to revel in the sweets of these lovely flowers that on every side appear so inviting ! my mother is so fond of nursing, that she would fain

E

have

have kept me at home with the thoughts of imaginary dangers, but, thanks to my courage and penetration, I have been able to frustrate her design. I shall be much deceived, continued I, stretching my wings, if these fail me; and I think, said I, swelling with my own importance, I have prudence to avoid the dangers I shall meet in this wilderness of sweets.—O, how delicious the odours from yon thyme bank! why do I delay to enjoy them! saying this, I sprung elated into the air, and bent my flight toward the inviting spot. But, alas! scarce was I on my wing before my strength began to fail, and notwithstanding the efforts I made to support myself, before I could reach the sweets I already thought my own, I fell headlong to the ground. What a check to my pride! In vain I endeavoured to rise. That little strength on which I had so much presumed was wholly exhausted,

exhausted, and I languished in the sight of a thousand sweets, without the power of enjoying one, but the mortification I suffered on this account was nothing to what I felt from seeing several young Bees, who had for the first time left the hive at the time I did, returning home laden with honey and wax, which they had collected from the surrounding flowers. I was ready to burst with envy, and was base enough to think I should have been less miserable had they been less happy.

I again and again repeated my efforts to rise upon my wings, but to as little purpose as before, and to conceal my disgrace, was glad to shelter myself behind a dock-leaf, which grew near the spot where I fell. Here, at least, I thought I could abide unobserved, and in safety, till I should recover strength to fly home, but, alas! the numbing coldness which presently seized upon

my limbs soon made me sensible that instead of recovering strength, if I staid long upon the ground, I must inevitably perish with cold. I now heartily repented of my obstinacy and disobedience, and thought I should atone for it with my life. A thousand times did I wish I had been less headstrong, and attended to the advice of my mother, and those whom age and experience rendered wiser than myself; but my repentance came too late, I could only make vain resolutions of future submission, when it was probable I should never see my mother or my native city more. One course only offered me the hope of either, and that in my present desperate situation I was glad to pursue; my wings had already failed me, my legs therefore were the only conveyance left me; I resolved to make use of these, and without loss of time crawled from my retreat, and with as much expedition as I was able to make, benumbed

numbed as I was with cold, and almost starving with hunger, was making my way toward home, when the delicious smell of some new honey drew me toward a hole, in which I judged there was a settlement of my own species, such a discovery in my present miserable situation delighted me, and, in little doubt of a favourable reception, was advancing toward the entrance of this subterraneous city, for such I rightly judged it was, when I perceived one of the inhabitants issue forth, and advance toward me.* His voice was so hoarse and loud that it perfectly stunned me, and though his form in some measure resembled the natives of my parent city, it was so gigantic that it filled me with consternation and terror. I would now gladly have made my retreat, but the voracious creature, dashing down,

* The wild Bee, generally called the Hornet.

seized me in her claws, and rose with me into the air. I had scarcely time to reflect upon the horror of my situation, when a huge creature, under whose extended wings thousands of our race might have sheltered, flew toward us and seized my cruel adversary, who, no longer mindful of her prey, let me fall, and was in her turn borne through the air by her powerful enemy.

For some time I remained on the ground more dead than alive, and when I sufficiently recovered my recollection, to know that my danger was over, I was under great apprehensions lest I had lost one of my wings by this accident. However, happily for me, I received no material damage from it, on the contrary, by luckily falling upon a bank thoroughly warmed, and exposed to the sun, I acquired new vigour to proceed on my journey homeward. What was my transport, when after all my toils and past danger,

ger, I arrived within sight of my native abode. But alas! my joys were imbittered by self-upbraidings, and the mortifying reflection, that I returned overwhelmed with disgrace, and sinking under the weight of fatigues and calamities, wholly brought upon me by my own headstrong folly; that I must sue for protection from those whose councils I had rejected with scorn, without being able to add a grain to the public stores. Sometimes my pride suggested that death was preferable to such disgrace, and I resolved to perish rather than expose myself to the too just reproaches of the community, but the cravings of hunger, and the severity of cold; soon banished such thoughts; urged by the calls of necessity I drew near our city, and my ambition, which all my calamities had not yet extinguished, urging me to enter it with some eclat, for the last time I made an effort to rise upon my wings; I

did not wholly fail in my attempt; and once more I rose above the ground, but instead of pitching, as I designed, upon the confines of my native city, I flew into a fatal snare, which, to my cost, was spread before the entrance. Instantly I perceived a monster, whose form scarcely filled me with more terror than astonishment, dart from a secret ambush and advance toward me. She was without wings, but her head was on all sides furnished with eyes, and though she was scarcely so big as myself, each of her jointed legs would, I am sure, nearly have measured the length of my whole body, and were armed with three horrid claws, the sight of which made me tremble.* I exerted every effort to free myself from the fatal snare into which I had fallen at a time when I thought myself se-

* The Spider is seen thus through the microscope.
cure

cure from danger. I struggled, beat my wings, and in my anguish uttered the most doleful cries. As my formidable enemy rapidly approached, my struggles became more violent. Despair gave me strength, and fortune once more favoured me, at the moment when her horrid fangs were extended to seize me, the net gave way, my adversary retreated, and I was once more free, and at the entrance of my home.

This last adventure so totally exhausted my strength, and damped my spirits, that every ambitious thought I might hitherto have entertained seemed effectually extinguished. I made the best of my way into the hive, and was glad to sneak quietly to my cell, where I arrived without molestation, and with a pleasure equal, at least, with all my mortification to those I had a few hours before felt on leaving it.

My mother, who notwithstanding my ill behaviour, preserved her former tenderness, rejoiced to see me, contrary to my expectations, return in safety: I assured her of my sincere repentance, and gave her a minute detail of all that had befallen me. Great, my daughter, said she, as your sufferings have been, I have known few guided by the same headstrong folly escape so well; hurried on by the same fatal impetuosity, ambitious of sharing the glories of the day, before they had strength to bear the fatigues of it, how many have sunk never to rise again, and expired even within the sight of the city. Happy, my child, are you to return in safety, and doubly happy to escape a calamity equally dreadful, which your inexperience had nearly drawn upon you. I tremble even at the very recollection of your danger. What blind phrenzy, to seek a retreat in the dwelling of our most-bitter enemies.

mies.* Alas! my child, had you entered, inevitable ruin must have followed, you would instantly have been seized, and with your life atoned for your imprudence.

I told my mother that the smell of the new honey led me to suppose I was near a settlement of my own species. Be careful, said my mother, of such mistakes in future; this wretched race, my child, continued she, bear indeed some resemblance of ours; but, oh! how degenerate! like us they fly abroad to collect honey; and without knowledge, or perseverance to perfect the work with the same exactness, imitate us in the stile of their buildings;† at all times ready

* The Hornet's nest.

† The Hornet's nest, though not destitute of its beauty, is less curious than the honey-comb of the common Bee. The cells that compose it are

ready for plunder and rapine, yet without courage to enter our cities, and hazard an engagement with numbers, they skulk about our entrance, and, watching a convenient opportunity, seize upon a single inhabitant and fly away with her in their claws, and tearing her to pieces, feast upon her carcase;* such, my daughter, would have been your fate, had not the timely destruction of your adversary relieved you.

The slight knowledge I had yet acquired of the world, made me listen to the account

said to resemble a split-pea, whereas those of the common Bee are hexagonal, that is to say, have six sides, and differ in other particulars.

The Hornet gathers honey as the common Bee, but of an inferior sort.

* The Hornet is a great enemy to the common Bee, it is said they never venture into the hive, but seize upon a single Bee, and destroy her, in the manner described in the story.

of those unprovoked cruelties with apparent astonishment and horror, which my mother observing replied; Alas, my daughter, what crimes may we not expect from a race prone to idleness from the very egg! with bodies more robust and vigorous than ours, their youth are indolent and sluggish,* nothing but severe discipline from the elders of the society will force them from their retreats to work, and necessity alone to continue their labours; judge what must be their sloth and abominable indolence, when every morning after sun-rising, one of the most vigorous of the band is obliged regularly to ascend an eminence at the top

* The Hornets are said to be far less diligent in their labours than the common Bee. An author observes, that in the fore part of the day, the young appear indolent, and unwilling to work, till driven from the hive by the old Bees.

of the city, and, by the continued clapping of her wings, awaken and summons the young Drones to work.* As I expressed my joy on my timely deliverance, my mother observed that I was even more fortunate than I imagined, since that monstrous creature,† which, by seizing my adversary, had relieved me from her gripe, was equally an enemy to our species, and would with as little remorse have devoured me. This was indeed giving me a fuller sense of the danger I had escaped; and when I related my last adventure at the entrance of the city, and described the creature who had filled me with such terror and surprize, her reply made me rejoice still more in my present security. Not more certain, said my

* This curious particular, is related in the Spectacle de la Nature.

† The swallow, a bird very destructive to Bees.
mother,

mother, your destruction from our winged enemies, than from this monster of cruelty,* who daily spins out her bowels in snares for our undoing. Those numerous eyes, my child, which seem so much the object of your surprize, enable her instantly to discover her prey, in what part soever of her fatal snare it is caught, and her long slender legs in the same moment to seize it; I tremble to relate the rest——practised in cruelty she binds the helpless victims still closer in the snare, and at leisure sucks their blood till they expire in the most dreadful torture, and fill the air with their dying groans. The recollection of these my former dangers made me content to remain quiet in my habitation, till my mother, and the elder Bees, should think I had sufficient strength to leave it with advantage. During

* The Spider.

the time of my confinement, I received many sage lectures from the elders of our community upon industry, frugality, and other moral virtues, and instructions concerning the labours in which I was soon expected to engage, and especially upon the best manner of gathering and conveying home the wax; I was also permitted to pay my court to our Queen,* who lived generally retired in her palace at the upper part of the city. My strength increased so fast, that in a few days I was judged capable of flying abroad, and sharing in the labours of my companions. Once more, therefore,

* In every swarm there is one Bee called the Queen-Bee, which rules absolute over all the rest, who pay an entire obedience to her. Many instances of the mutual attachment subsisting between the Queen-Bee and her subjects are related, which are truly surprizing.

having

having bid farewell to my mother (who gave me much affectionate advice at parting) I ventured from my present habitation. Far from being daunted by the recollection of those dangers I had so lately experienced, I issued forth in the best spirits imaginable, and soared upon my wings, which I now found were capable of supporting me. Animated with the hope of atoning by my diligence for my former disgrace, I flew with ardour from flower to flower, and as the business assigned me was to collect wax, attended wholly to that care. Sometimes rolling in the flowers, I collected the yellow grains in the hairs of my body;* sometimes I practised the method taught me by our elders, and, pressing

* This curious account of the manner in which these little industrious creatures gather and convey home their honey is borrowed from the *Spectacle de la Nature*.

the

the scattered grains into little balls, slid them one by one into the cavity which opens at our hinder feet to receive them. At times I was interrupted in this work by the air, which would bear away the grains, or by the delicate texture of the flowers, which, often bending under my feet, would prevent me from packing up my burden: on these occasions I was forced to seek out a steady place, and, working the grains into a mass, wind them round my legs. When I had thus furnished myself with as much wax as I had strength to carry, I returned home with my burden: I was met at the entrance of our abode by several of my fellow labourers who assisted me to unlade, and bore the wax I brought to the cells, where, others waited to knead it, whilst I returned to the fields to collect more. Sometimes my task was changed from gathering of wax to collecting of honey, which I faithfully deposited

deposited into the public Magazine; and when the weather would not permit us to pursue our work, I assisted in bearing our dead from the city, and in clearing it of any filth which might accidentally have defiled it:* in short, I was so diligent, frugal, and attentive to the interests of the community that I became a general favourite, and by my good behaviour entirely obliterated the remembrance of my follies.

I had not pursued my labours long, when our city growing too confined for the great increase of its inhabitants, an order was issued by the elders, for all under a certain age to seek another settlement,† I was among this number, and whatever might be the

* When the weather will not permit them to collect honey, the Bees regularly perform this work of clearing their hive of dead Bees, &c.

† When the number of the Bees increase, so that there is not sufficient room in the hive to contain

the pain I felt in the thought of quitting the hive in which I had first received my existence, like the rest, I was obliged to submit to this necessary though severe decree. At a signal given, we departed from our ancient habitation, headed by one of the royal offspring, to whom we swore allegiance. It is scarcely possible, my children, to give you an idea of our lovely Queen, whose beauty so entirely surpassed that of her subjects.* Her whole form denoted that she was born to command, and the

them, they swarm, that is to say, a part of them are dismissed by the old Bees to seek another habitation, the young swarm, however, never depart without a Queen, nor is there ever more than one promoted at a time in the same hive.

* The Queen-Bee differs from the others in shape and colour, her body is longer and her back of a bright black, underneath she is of a clear beautiful

the virtues she discovered proved that she was so, being just, temperate, and affectionate to her people, and her commands ever tending to the good of the community. But to proceed. Under the auspices of our new Queen, we soon overcame the regret we felt on leaving our ancient city, and carefully surrounding her lest mischief should befall her on the way, cheerfully took our flight. The wings of our Queen being too short to weather a long journey, she pitched upon the branch of a tree at a little distance from the place we had left,* where she remained, attended by a numerous guard, each ready to sacrifice life in

tiful yellow, as are also her legs, whereas the legs of the common Bee and Drones are black, and their bodies of a dusky brown.

WILDMAN.

* The Queen is always surrounded by a number of Bees, who will rather lose their lives than desert her.

her

her defence, while different parties were dispatched to reconnoitre the surrounding parts, and fix upon a proper place to lay the foundation of our new city. I was in one of those detachments, and having discovered a hollow tree, a part of which I thought would be an advantageous situation, flew with the intelligence to our Queen, who, attended by her faithful commons, bent her flight to the place, and having signified her royal approbation, we immediately took possession and fell to work, while our Queen, surrounded by her proper guards, retreated to a place of safety and surveyed us at a distance. Our first object was to clear away the filth and rubbish, a labourious task, which, however, we performed with all possible expedition.* Then, as we could

* The following very curious account of the manner in which these surprizing little creatures proceed

could not hope to succeed in our work without regularity, we divided our number into four distinct bands, to each of which we assigned a different employment. The first band was ordered to the fields to collect wax and glew the materials for the building: the second was deputed to work upon those materials, and form them into a rough sketch of the dimensions and partitions of the cells, a very laborious work, it being necessary to level and extend the wax as well as to adjust and cut it with the jelly; the work of the third band was to polish and perfect what was but roughly sketched by the second; and the fourth band was deputed to bring provisions to the labourers who could not leave their work, their attendance was wholly

ceed in the work of making the honey-comb, is almost literally given by the ingenious author of *la Spectacle de la Nature*.

confined

confined to the third band; as no distribution of food was allowed to the other two: for as to the first their office calling them to the fields, it was supposed they would not forget themselves, and though the business of the second, whose office was to sketch out the dimensions of the cells, was laborious, their work was soon over, and then they might go and recreate themselves in the fields. But it was different with those who perfected the work, and never left it till finished; the length of time they were employed made frequent refreshments necessary: the business of the fourth band therefore was wholly to work upon these, and when the labourer signified his inclination to eat, by letting down his trunk, to supply him with a few drops of honey. But I am tedious.

So indefatigable was each in the labours assigned him, that before the return of the

next

next rising sun the work was completed, and a structure raised capable of accommodating our whole nation, which consisted of three thousand.* I must not omit to tell you that we were not negligent in erecting a noble and commodious palacet† for the reception of our sovereign in the upper part of the city, to which we conducted her amidst the repeated acclamations of her dutious subjects, and with all the honours that were so justly her due. From this day we pursued our labours as usual, and lived in the highest state of harmony and peace, mutually contributing to the neces-

* It is affirmed, that these little industrious creatures will complete a honey-comb, capable of receiving three thousand Bees, in the space of one day.

† In every comb there is one large round cell, built apart from the rest, for the reception of the Queen-Bee.

fities of each other, and daily returning from the fields laden with delicious sweets, which we faithfully deposited in the public Magazines for the mutual benefit of the whole. In a little time our treasuries overflowed, and the daily increase of our inhabitants, soon rendered us a colony equally rich and powerful as the one we had left; nay, in time the structure we had built became too confined for the increase of our numbers, and we in our turn were obliged to send out large detachments under the conduct of the royal issue, to find other settlements, as we had been forced before them. But, alas! our tranquillity was not of very long duration; not far from us was a subterraneous city, inhabited by a nation,* destructive to our race.

One

* A settlement of Wasps. They build a very curious habitation in the earth, the materials for which

One of these rapacious plunderers had for some time been observed to skulk about the entrance of our city, and at last attempt to slide in with two or three Bees, who returned laden from the fields.

She was immediately seized by the guard, but though one of the most vigorous and experienced among us, and assisted by the other Bees, such was the superior strength and agility of our enemy, that he made his escape without receiving the punishment due to his intended crime; this event, however, awakening the suspicion of the whole swarm, the

are a sort of thick glew and shreds of wood, which they collect from the frames of windows, &c. and form into a sort of paste. These creatures are great enemies to Bees. The following is a true account of the manner in which the Wasps attack the Bees.

guard

guard at the porch was immediately doubled, but no second attempt being made, in time we grew negligent, and ceased to prepare for our defence with the same caution: alas! this security was our bane; when we least expected it our enemy returned with others, who before a reinforcement could be sent to defend the entrance, pushed by the guard, who, with several more, lost her life in opposing them, and bore off a considerable booty from our stores. I need not tell you, that after this we kept ourselves in continual readiness for an attack; but, alas! it was too late. Our enemies, flushed with their former success, and more eager for having tasted the sweets that they had carried off, returned and made the attack in such numbers, that every attempt we made to oppose them proved ineffectual; in spite of all resistance they made their way
into

into the hive, killing some and wounding others, broke open our stores, and not only glutted themselves with the sweets, but even feasted upon the bodies of the slain. These invasions after a time ceased, our merciless enemies no more returned to attack us; from what cause their forbearance proceeded we could never determine, but it is probable some misfortune happened to the whole swarm. You will suppose, my children, continued the Parent Bee, that our misfortune ended here, and that diligence and industry would soon have repaired our losses; alas! this was but the beginning of our sorrow, we had still greater evils to encounter from our own species. It was now the season when flowers beginning to disappear,* less
honey

* In the spring before the flowers are blown, or in autumn when they are all gone off, the Bees
being

guard at the porch was immediately doubled, but no second attempt being made, in time we grew negligent, and ceased to prepare for our defence with the same caution: alas! this security was our bane; when we least expected it our enemy returned with others, who before a reinforcement could be sent to defend the entrance, pushed by the guard, who, with several more, lost her life in opposing them, and bore off a considerable booty from our stores. I need not tell you, that after this we kept ourselves in continual readiness for an attack; but, alas! it was too late. Our enemies, flushed with their former success, and more eager for having tasted the sweets that they had carried off, returned and made the attack in such numbers, that every attempt we made to oppose them proved ineffectual; in spite of all resistance they made their way into

into the hive, killing some and wounding others, broke open our stores, and not only glutted themselves with the sweets, but even feasted upon the bodies of the slain. These invasions after a time ceased, our merciless enemies no more returned to attack us; from what cause their forbearance proceeded we could never determine, but it is probable some misfortune happened to the whole swarm. You will suppose, my children, continued the Parent Bee, that our misfortune ended here, and that diligence and industry would soon have repaired our losses; alas! this was but the beginning of our sorrow, we had still greater evils to encounter from our own species. It was now the season when flowers beginning to disappear,* less
honey

* In the spring before the flowers are blown, or in autumn when they are all gone off, the Bees
being

honey was to be gathered than formerly; it was not unusual for a working Bee, after being on the wing for a whole day, to return home unladen. A Bee that inhabited a settlement at some distance from ours was in the same predicament, when she was unfortunately attracted by the smell of the new honey which proceeded from the repositories, our rapacious enemies the Wasps, though closely sealed, had broke open. Rendered desperate by necessity, she immediately bent her flight to our city, by stratagem entered it, and, unobserved, bore off a considerable booty. Her success animated the rest to follow her

being at a loss for honey, endeavour to steal from other stocks, and on these occasions such fierce wars often ensue between the contending parties, that the ground before the hive is found strewn with thousands of dead Bees.

example,

example, and the next day we were attacked by a large body of our unprincipled neighbours. We immediately prepared for battle, and engaged them with such fury, that they were obliged to retreat with the loss of many of their bravest warriors. This ill success did not however deter them from pursuing their enterprize; animated with the hope of obtaining possession of the delicious booty which had first instigated them to these hostile proceedings, that opposition they met seemed but to inflame them the more; a few days after they returned with fresh reinforcements, and attacked us with renewed vigour: they besieged our dwelling with the greatest fury on every side; while some attacked the entrance, others with the most determined resolution, endeavoured to force their way through the very roof. We in the mean while fought with equal fury in defence

sence of our liberties and property, but more especially of our beloved Queen, whose safety was more dear to each of her loyal commoners than freedom, property, or even life itself. It is impossible, my children, unless you had been present, that you should entertain a just idea of the horrors of that fatal engagement; we attacked the enemy both within and without the walls of the city; and such fury animated each party, that in a short time the ground was covered promiscuously with the slain both of the victors and the vanquished. Could valour, or the justice of our cause have prevailed against numbers, we had certainly gained the day; but the large detachments which repeatedly arrived to reinforce the enemy, rendered our resistance vain. Still, however, we defended our cause with the same spirit as in the first onset, and, with the small number

ber

ber of our troops that remained, continued to oppose a multitude of the enemy. Thus far, my children, I can assure you from the knowledge of myself, and those loyal and brave warriors at whose side I fought, that this unequal combat would have lasted till we had all been stretched among the slain, had not a fatal event occurred to damp our ardour, and rendered us an easy prey to the enemy. This was no other than the loss of our beloved Queen, whose preservation alone induced us to continue an engagement upon terms so unequal, that all hope of victory seemed vain and extravagant. Flushed with success, and secure in the superiority of their numbers, our imperious conquerors mocking all opposition, broke through the guards who surrounded our unfortunate Queen, and defended her life with the loss of their own, and violently dragging

dragging her from the palace, while two of the merciless assailants held, another cruelly pierced her to the heart* before those of her loyal subjects, who were encountering another detachment of the enemy, could arrive to sacrifice their lives in her defence.

The fate of our royal mistress was no sooner known, than universal grief and consternation prevailed throughout the army. That noble fury which had before raged in the breast of each individual and animated her

* An author, who has wrote copiously upon Bees, observes, "their chief instrument of war is in their tail, and called their sting, with their fangs they lay hold of robbers which come to steal their honey, while another comes and pierces her bowels with her spear, or sting, which always carries death wherever it comes among their own kind."

to the combat, seemed now extinct: no further opposition was made to the enemy, who, while we bewailed our sovereign, and paid the last duty to her honoured remains, unmolested plundered our city, which no one thought worth defending, since she for whom alone they defended it was no more.

Much, however, as we grieved for the loss of our Queen, our present desperate situation claimed also a share in our regret. It was not a time to begin house-keeping anew, for, as I before observed, there was little honey to be gathered from the fields, and the materials for building of cells to store it in were equally scarce. But, however great the horrors of approaching famine, the thought of being scattered without a leader, from whence we apprehended anarchy and confusion might rise among us, was equally dreadful. What was to be done? Our situation called for immediate redress.

One expedient only offered, and self preservation made us readily adopt it. We judged from our own politics that our leader being slain, and no other opposition made, our conquerors would readily admit us into their government as profitable members, whose labours would render them a more rich and powerful nation. This union seemed the only means left to preserve us from absolute ruin; unless we had followed the example too often, I blush to say, set by our brethren, in such cases of necessity, of besieging other colonies, and enriching ourselves at their expence. Our proffered services, as we conjectured, were joyfully accepted, we united our interests with those of our conquerors, and acknowledged the victorious Queen* as our true and lawful sovereign.

* As long as their *Queen* remains to animate them, the rest of the Bees continue to oppose their ene-

From this moment our former animosities, were on each side forgotten. We assisted in breaking open our stores, and loading ourselves with the treasures they contained, took wing with our new allies.

We presently alighted at the settlement which was in future to be our new abode, and each Bee having transmitted the contents of her honey-bag into the public stores, returned for a fresh supply, which she deposited as before. This work was continued for some days, till our old habitation was entirely closed. Alas, how vain were our toils! scarcely were they ended, before all our

mies with great fury, but she is no sooner dead, than they become one family with the robbing Bees, and assist in carrying away the honey from their old habitation, to the settlement of their allies.

WARDER ON BEES,

flourishing

flourishing colony was in ruins. One dreadful night, the horrors of which is still present to my imagination, I suddenly awoke, and, with inconceivable terror and amazement, perceived that our city was borne from the place where it stood. The motion continued, and I attempted to awaken my fellow citizens; but they were so deeply buried in sleep, I had only time to rouse them with whom I rushed forth at the entrance to see whether danger was at hand. How did our terror increase on perceiving that we were at the brink of a pit, from whence a blue flame arose, accompanied with a smoke, the stench of which nearly deprived myself and three companions of escaping the threatened danger. O! my children, how shall I describe the terror that seized us, when almost at the same instant, we perceived the abode we had just left, placed
over

over the mouth of this fatal pit: not one of the flumbering unsuspecting inhabitants escaped; alas! young and old, noble and ignoble, were involved in one common ruin.*

As for me, I beheld the dreadful scene transfixed with horror, and should have given myself up to the most fatal despair, had it not been for my three companions, who escaped with me, and who, notwithstanding

* To gain possession of the honey, it was formerly thought necessary to destroy the little industrious makers of it; and the method of doing this, was, by placing the hive, stopped on every side, over a hole dug in the earth, in which lighted rags dipped in brimstone were put, the flames from which suffocated the Bees. This cruel ceremony was performed in the evening when the Bees were quiet in the hive, and is what the Bees, in the story, are supposed

standing their own grief, generously endeavoured to soften mine, which was the more poignant, as four of my offspring who had not many days left the egg, were involved in the general ruin. Lamentations were, however, of no avail, we left the spot where the fatal catastrophe had happened, and took our flight to the settlement, where I once more became subject to a new sovereign.*

supposed to allude to. The reader will be pleased to hear that a method has, within these few years, been discovered, of taking the honey without destroying the Bees, which, it is to be hoped, renders this method less frequently practised.

* The Bees readily receive any addition to their numbers, provided they come without their Queen-Bee, having by natural instinct, says our Author, who has written copiously upon the subject, that the greater their numbers are, the better they are able to provide for and defend themselves.

Mr. WARNER.

At

At that time the inhabitants were in the utmost consternation and perplexity. A huge creature, whose like had never been seen within the confines of the city, had made his way into it, and filled every individual with consternation. It was not, indeed, formed to excite terror, for a large shell, which encumbered its back, and which was judged to be the habitation of this extraordinary creature, as it was observed, when attacked, he attempted to retreat into it, rendered him too unwieldy for warlike exploits. This surprising creature, which one of the inhabitants, more knowing than the rest, pronounced to be a snail, was attacked at the entrance by the guard and wounded. But whether the pain he felt deprived him of recollection, or that it was not sufficient to quell his presumption, but instead of retreating, he made his way into the very midst of the city. The inhabitants, incensed

censed at this boldness, and judging that he came on some hostile or villainous design, immediately fell upon the unfortunate creature, who expired pierced with a thousand wounds. The next care was to convey the carcase out of the city, and several vigorous Bees engaged in this business ; but alas ! they soon found it less easy than they, at first, imagined ; in vain they exerted their whole strength, assisted by the most vigorous of their comrades ; a thick gum, which issued from the body of this extraordinary creature, when living, fastened him, now dead, to the place where he expired, and rendered all efforts to remove the carcase ineffectual. Nothing less than the most fatal consequences could be expected from this accident. In time the carcase of this monstrous creature would putrify, and beside infecting the hive, by the noxious fumes arising

arising from it, worms would be engendered in the corruption, which having devoured the snail, would ascend into the apartments of the young Bees and attack them.

Matters were in this state when I arrived with my comrades at this settlement. The whole nation was in alarm, and every mother was distracted for the safety of her young family. Various attempts had been made to remove the carcase, with the same ill success as before, and the most experienced sages had not yet been able to suggest a remedy in a case so truly desperate: I know not how it was, that I had more presence of mind than the rest, but it was so, I thought of an expedient which effectually remedied the threatened evil. Perhaps, my children, you suppose that I invented some wonderful machine, by the help of which the carcase was removed, but be
not

not deceived, my expedient was by far more simple. I advised that the carcase should instantly be incruſted ſo cloſely on every ſide with the thick glew we uſe in erecting our dwellings, that no inſect could enter to lay her eggs, nor any malignant fumes tranſpire through the pores.

This expedient was approved, and the whole community ſet to work with ſuch ſpirits, that in a ſhort time the buſineſs was completed, and inſtead of the noxious creature which had filled every individual with ſuch alarm, nothing was now to be ſeen but a huge mountain of glew, which we could walk over without moleſtation.*

* The whole of this adventure of the ſnail, and the ingenuity of the Bees in getting rid of the carcaſe, is related by the Abbe le Plunk, in his Nature Diſplayed.

This simple expedient, as it effectually prevented the consequence so much dreaded, gained me such applause that I was soon exalted to the highest honours, that is to say, I was enrolled among the elders of the nation. Since that time, my children, I have lived in ease and plenty, surrounded by innumerable friends, and undisturbed by those misfortunes which formerly interrupted my repose; and believe me, my children, in these by last moments, it is no small comfort to reflect, that I have not been ungrateful for the advantages I have enjoyed, nor an unprofitable member of the community. I have never shrunk from danger when our liberties or the rights of our honoured sovereign were at stake, nor have I ever returned unladen when honey or wax was to be gathered; but my pains, continued the dying Bee, increase, let me hasten,

hasten to a conclusion. Still might I have tasted the blessings I have enjoyed under this peaceful government, had I been guided by prudence, and not yielded to fatal impetuosity. Know, my children, that among the enemies to whose attacks our race are constantly exposed, is one more daring than the rest,* who frequently builds her habitation upon the very confines of our dominions, plunders our dwelling, and even feeds upon our defenceless offspring, it was my misfortune to see one of these creatures enter and attack our stores; inflamed with indignation, I sprung forward to revenge the injury, and rashly darted forth my sting with such violence, that I left it in the body of

* The mouse, particularly destructive to Bees. This animal builds its nest in the crown of the hive, and breaking through the comb, feeds upon the honey and young Bees.

my enemy, and with it my life.* From my fatal end, my children, learn to make your attacks with prudence, and to moderate your passions, lest, like me, you are yourselves involved in the ruin you have prepared for your enemy.

Toward the latter part of the discourse, the Bee was observed to falter, and having with difficulty concluded it, she sunk down and expired, lamented, not only by her children, but the whole community.

* A Bee, it is said, seldom lives above an hour after she has lost her sting, as her bowels are attached to it.

FINIS.

Printed and Sold by John Marshall, No. 4, Aldermay Church-Yard, of whom may be had a great Variety of Publications, Libraries, &c.

THE LIFE OF A BEE.
 my energy, and with it my life. Then my
 final end, my children, have to make your
 attacks with prudence, and to moderate
 your passions, lest, lest you are your-
 selves involved in what you have pre-
 pared for your enemy.
 Toward the latter part of the discourse,
 the Bee was observed to faint, and having
 with difficulty concluded it, she sank down
 and expired, lamented, not only by her
 children, but the whole community.



• A Bee, it is said, seldom lives above an hour.
 although she has lost this, as her powers are ex-
 hausted to it.

FINIS

Printed and sold by John Marshall, No. 4, Abchurch Lane, London.
 Year, of which may be had a great variety of new and interesting